

MAINE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
January 9, 2006
(approved 2/7/2006)

Chair Jeffrey Cammack called the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission to order at 1:00 p.m. in Room 436 (Criminal Justice and Public Safety committee room), State House, Augusta. Members present were Jack Berry, Jay Bradshaw, Representative Richard Brown, Steve Bunker, John Cannon, Chief Jeffrey Cammack, Chief John Dean, Representative Robert Duplessie, Alex McPhedran, Geoffrey Maker, Senator Richard Nass, Harty Norris, Chief Jethro Pease, Charles Soltan, Leslie Wiles, Steve Willis and Susan Pinette (staff). Members excused included Representative Patricia Blanchette, Senator Bruce Bryant, Chief Darrel Fournier, Edward Johnston and David Wacker. Colonel Craig Poulin and Lieutenant Donald Pomerlow from the Maine State Police, Chief Michael Thurlow of the Scarborough Fire Department, Chief Phil McGouldrick of the Cape Elizabeth Fire Department and Chief Kevin Guimond of the South Portland Fire Department attended as guests of the Fire Commission.

A motion by Charlie Soltan, seconded by Harty Norris, to accept the meeting minutes of December 5, 2005. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Cammack introduced Lt. Donald Pomerlow of the Maine State Police to make a presentation on the Maine Emergency Communications Board. Lt. Pomerlow, Acting Executive Director of the board, distributed materials to the Fire Commission and learned that the policy board has authority for four state police communications sites-Houlton, Orono, Gray and Augusta. Colonel Craig Poulin, Chief of the Maine State Police later joined the discussion and said that the State Police want to be an active participant with firefighters and EMS personnel. Chief Poulin asked for cooperation and to work together to meet a common state interest. Fire Commission members inquired if the State Police could estimate the number of dispatch/communication centers needed in Maine. Members were told it may probably be more than four and many factors will have to be taken into consideration.

Committee Reports

The Working Group on Residential Sprinklers distributed their January 6th meeting minutes. Members attending the meeting included Charlie Soltan, John Dean, Alex McPhedran, Jethro Pease, Steve Willis and John Beatty (MFT&E). The working group developed a table including groups, core issues, strategies, training and education and incentives. They initially identified twenty -three

groups and their core issues. The working group agreed their approach should be slow and steady, work to overcome the “Hollywood factor” and consider local options. The group’s next meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 6th at 10am in Charlie Soltan’s office and they will focus on drafting an education and training program and incentives for early adoption.

The Training Facilities Committee informed the Fire Commission that their grant proposal had been denied by MEMA. However, members were told alternatives might be available and the Fire Commission may be able to make a separate presentation to MEMA at a future date.

A motion by Jethro Pease, seconded by Charlie Soltan, to authorize Chair Cammack to appoint several members of the Fire Commission to present another proposal before the Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) for funding assistance regarding the training facilities study. The motion passed unanimously.

The Spring Conference committee reports that plans for the Blaine House Conference on Emergency First Response are moving ahead. Chief Cammack distributed a draft copy of the conference brochure. Members were asked to review and forward any comments and suggestions to the committee. A copy of a letter sent to vendors/exhibitors and a diagram of the exhibit area were also distributed. The Spring Conference is scheduled for Tuesday, March 21st and Wednesday, March 22nd.

The Bylaws committee has distributed a draft copy of the revised Fire Commission bylaws. Members will vote at the February meeting to accept the committee’s recommendations.

Old Business

L.D. 10, the Fire Commission’s bill regarding the \$75,000 authorization to conduct a study for firefighter health care, was reported out of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety committee as a divided report. L.D. 10 passed in the House of Representatives (prior to this meeting) and the roll call list was distributed to members. The next step is a vote in the Senate.

L.D. 1021 “*An Act To Implement Task Force Recommendations Relating to Parity and Portability of Benefits for Law Enforcement Officers and Firefighters*” remains in the Labor Committee and discussions continue.

Fire Commission members continue to attend community meetings across the state. Members are asked to forward their meeting notes to staff, who will compile the information.

New Business

The first meeting of the Fire Caucus was scheduled for Monday, January 9, 2006 prior to the Fire Commission's monthly meeting. Since the Legislature did not meet and few committees were scheduled to meet, attendance at the Fire Caucus was sparse. However, Fire Commission members continue to believe it is important to maintain a dialogue with legislators and will host additional Fire Caucus meetings in February and March.

Fire Commission members were updated on the progress of the Task Force to Study Maine's Homeland Security Needs. The task force has scheduled a total of nine public meetings around the state- the two final meetings to be held in Saco and Bangor. Additionally, the Task Force will hold work sessions on Friday, January 27th and Friday, February 3rd. Both meetings will begin at 10:00am in Room 220 (Labor committee room) in the Cross State Office Building.

L.D. 1879, "*An Act To Enhance Firefighter Safety*", sponsored by Representative Duplessie, requires structures that use truss construction display an emblem signifying that construction and the materials used in the truss construction. The bill also further protects firefighters by calling for a voluntary statewide recommendation for uniform standards of identifying dangerous or vacant properties. The bill was referred to the Criminal Justice and Public Safety committee.

Two additional bills brought to the attention of the Fire Commission were L.D. 1816 "*An Act To Clarify the Intent of the Law That Allows Retired Firefighters To Retain Their Firefighter License Plates*" (Emergency)- sponsor is Representative Troy Jackson and L.D. 1825 "*An Act To Facilitate Inspections of Heating Appliances and Chimneys*" –sponsor is Representative Douglas Thomas. L.D. 1816 was referred to Transportation Committee and L.D. 1825 was referred to the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee.

The Fire Commission also agreed to go forward with submitting a resolve for this legislative session asking for a study to identify whether the current plan of 16-24 PSAPs and E-911 dispatch centers in Maine is the best plan for Maine. Members also requested the study include looking at the issue of "interoperability" and how to pull together all the multiple plans. Members agreed not to set a specific number and referred to the Statewide Incident Communications Interoperability Draft Plan that was distributed earlier. Members also suggested the resolve be referred to the Utilities and the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committees.

With no further business to come before the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission, Chair Cammack adjourned the meeting at 3:19pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Pinette
Staff

Maine Fire Protection Services Commission
Meeting Schedule

FIRE COMMISSION SCHEDULE

Monday, March 6 th	Fire Caucus	State House	12Noon
Monday, March 6 th	Regular Meeting	State House	1:00pm
Tuesday, March 21 st	Spring Conference	ACC	All day
Tuesday, March 21 st	Legislative Reception	ACC	5-8:00pm
Wednesday, March 22 nd	Spring Conference	ACC	All day
Monday, April 3 rd	Fire Caucus	State House	12Noon
Monday, April 3 rd	Regular Meeting **	State House	1pm
Monday, May 8 th	Regular Meeting	Florian Hall	1pm

** Election of Officers